



State of California  
**Respiratory Care Board**  
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**Inquiry:** Would you please let me know if it is within our scope of practice to assist the Neonatologist, under direct or indirect supervision, in placing either an Umbilical Artery Catheter, or Umbilical Venous Catheter? In addition, would it be within our scope of practice to trim the umbilical stump in order to place the catheter and suture it in place? If it makes it easier to answer, could you please give me the direction of how a Respiratory Therapist, would be able to be the most autonomous within the scope of the RCP license?

**Response:** It is our assessment that the functions you inquired about would be classified as follows:

Umbilical Artery and Vein Placement - Classification 1B  
(Not verbatim from the Respiratory Care Practice Act but, in the Respiratory Care Board's judgement, highly inferred and allowed.)

Umbilical Stump Trimming - Classification 1B  
(Not verbatim from the Respiratory Care Practice Act but, in the Respiratory Care Board's judgement, highly inferred and allowed.)

In addition to the classifications listed above, the intent of the practice act recognizes the existence of overlapping functions between physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, physical therapists, respiratory care practitioners and other licensed health care personnel (3701, Article I, General Provisions). As such, the onus is on the licensed health facility to develop appropriate training and competencies that would provide these functions in a manner that would be safe when administered to the public.

Reference # 2001-C-39